The Hampden Hippocrat

A Bulletin for the Hampden District of the Massachusetts Medical Society

VOLUME VII FALL, 1948 Number 3

Council Repercussions

October 6, 1948, 10:40 A.M. —3:30 P.M.

Dan Reardon attempted to enliven his debut as a presiding officer by reading a metrical effusion, the so-called "Rape of the Gavel", or "Where is our Wandering Knocker Tonight?". The fact was disclosed of another precedent shattered by his predecessor in office. Truthfully however, the latter had assumed that retention of the current gavel was the custom and that the wooden hammer was small enough return for his year of blood, sweat and tears. Embarrassment was suffered by all concerned when the Statler management put in a claim, along with assorted ash trays, towels and glassware, for their turned near-mahogany gadget.

President Reardon was presented with a weapon of his own by the Secretary out of petty cash, and the immediate past-President was notified to bring the historic implement back to headquarters for a suitable plate inscribed with his name and years of service.

Jim McCann celebrated his return to Council membership by giving a lucid explanation of the current status of the Blue Shield with emphasis on the fact that the organization is now able to stand upon its own legs and operates with an adequate surplus. Certain revisions in organization have given an equal division of control with the Blue Cross organization. The hope was expressed that growth would continue because there are still less than 1,000,000 contracts in force, or not enough to forestall compulsory insurance. It is pleasingly informational to have the official spokesman of the Blue Shield a Councillor, ex-officio.

For the second year no member of the Committee on Cancer was present to present and sponsor the report. For the second year this report was not accepted, largely because of this fact. President Papen of the Norfolk District moved that the recommendation for voluntary registration be tabled, thus choking off debate before Charley Lund had a chance to speak to the question. The latter was quite disturbed and felt that all who wished should be permitted to discuss any or all questions before a motion to table would be recognized. In fact, he hopes that the new Committee on Rules will study the problem to provide for future quandaries. It was never intended by rule makers, he maintained, that such a parliamentary trick should prohibit legitimate debate.

The best alteration in rules might be the requirement that in the absence of a sponsor a report will be deferred until other business is out of the way and if none shows up during the course of the meeting, that it automatically be deferred until the next meeting of the Council. Dr. Browne proposed the Congressional dodge of declaration of a "new day" by the chair at the end of the regular business to get around the impasse, but that seemed to be too much to ask of our inexperienced parliamentarians.

In place of the resolutions on Specialty Boards that were passed by a slim major-

(Continued on Page 2)

Hampden Hippocrat

"Life is short and art is long, the occasion fleeting, experience fallacious and judgment difficult." —Hippocrates, 430 B.C.

This Issue 900 Copies

OFFICERS OF THE HAMPDEN DISTRICT MEDICAL SOCIETY

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ity at the annual meeting of the Hampden District Medical Society last Spring and laid on the table for further information by the Executive Committee in their report at the beginning of this session of the Council, the New York State resolutions on the same subject were presented. According to the Council rules that were adopted to avoid the protracted sessions that heretofore obtained, all new business must automatically be referred to appropriate committees for study before action by the council is sought. Necessary unanimous consent for this was denied by two nayes, but a suspension of the rules was given. The resolutions were published in full in the Journal of the A. M. A. for July 3, 1948 on page 886. The Council voted to approve the resolutions 'in principle'—37-30. (Yes, by 3:00 P. M. there were only 67 out of more than 300 Councilors present to render an authoritative decision!)

Just after the new gavel ended the meeting, the Secretary made tracks for a bookseller and purchased for himself a copy of General Robert's revised rules. In the fullness of his time, both factually and chronologically, the new Secretary declared that he fully intends to perfect himself in the intricacies of procedure. It will be a pleasant relief to have someone to look to or at least to blame when progress of our business bogs down. From past experience, it is evident that more than a few months are required to achieve

Mountains Labored

It was, perhaps, a fortunate accident last year that thrust an innocent bystander into the vice-presidency of the Hampden District Medical Society, the present presiding officer, Robert Dudley Hildreth of Westfield; and along with him a new Secretary, Walter W. Williams of Springfield. The original babes-in-the-woods were well versed by comparison in the administration of the affairs of a section of the Massachusetts Medical Society. Themselves, praiseworthily, were the first to admit their shortcomings. They called for help; called all officers, in fact, and heads of committees into conference,—Hagler and Johnson of Program, Seaman of the Blue Cross, Nominating councilor Schadt and his alternate, George L. Steele, Commissioner of Trials Henderson and your editor, to talk over procedures old and new.

A splendid attendance gave evidence of interest. The discussion was full and free—(but not the steaks and the trimmings that were Dutch treat). The chief theme was increased usefulness of our Society in particular to the fellows. Far too long, it was argued, we have been content to 'let George do the job' that we all should share. By way of emphatic contrast the programs were cited of the Norfolk, Worcester and Middlesex South District Societies. In that light, the past record of Hampden seemed distinctly pallid if not actually ischemic. In extenuation, the familiar story of competition from the Springfield Academy of Medicine was haled forth just as President E. A. Knowlton left it several years ago. In

a small degree of the efficiency of the rule-minded militarist whose authority we have approved. E.P.B.

(see page seven)

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1949 a cooperative solution may be evolved.

The knowledge of by-laws proved to be exteremely hazy. No one present could produce a copy. Doubt even was cast upon their existence. In the end, one and all came to the conclusion that an executive body is needed to advise the officers, and, by serial replacements, to provide a vital continuing impetus to keep in motion the machinery from year to year regardless of changing officers. Problems that arise between regular meetings could be handled in this manner without undue delay.

Our Editors are more than glad to justify their selection by placing before you the resolution that was proposed to provide for the change as outlined. This will be introduced at the next regular meeting for your consideration and action:

CLASSIFICATION LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HAMPDEN DISTRICT MEDICAL SOCIETY

Following a request by the Public Relations committee of the H.D.M.S. that steps be taken so that the public may be better informed where medical services can be obtained nights, Sundays and holidays, the Secretary's office has undertaken the compilation of such lists. These lists if they have not already been received through the mails by members will be available at the November meeting.

Owing to the failure of about 100 members to return their questionnaire forms, their names could not be included in this initial listing. In case of errors or omissions, it will be necessary to have a completed questionnaire form submitted. If this classification of doctors according to the times of availability, and according to the types of practice in which they are engaged, is found to be of value to the community and to the doctors, the necessary revisions can be made with little trouble at about 6 month intervals. It will be of much greater value if all of the doctors of the Hampden District Medical Society would submit the necessary information so that the list could be complete.

Walter W. Williams, M. D.
Secretary

The following Committee on Diabetes has been appointed by Doctor Hildreth, and he requests that notification of their appointment be made in the Hippocrat.

Eoline G. DuBois, Springfield
Chairman
Samuel Fox, Holyoke
Samuel Botsubay, Holyoke
Harold J. Holleran, Westfield

DIABETES

Calling all doctors to take part in the Diabetes Detection Drive sponsored by the American Diabetes Association and beginning with Diabetes Week December 6-12.

The object of this drive is to promote the early discovery and treatment of the million diabetics in the U. S. at present unknown but whose existence has been proved by a series of surveys. The complications that have made diabetes eighth among the chief causes of death, despite insulin, are preventable only by finding the disease before one is aware that he has it. This of course can be done only by mass blood and urine sugar tests.

This ambitious plan depends upon the active support of every physician, and to this end each state medical society has appointed a committee to work out details through local groups. But it is of

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especial interest to the general practitioner that the American Diabetes Association, to stimulate interest among physicians for better treatment of the diabetics under their care, is planning an intensive educational campaign, including publication of a Handbook of Therapy, containing the very latest information as to methods of treatment.

The radio, newspapers and other avenues of publicity will be used to make the public diabetes conscious, and every adult over 35, all relatives of diabetics, all overweights and all who feel below par, will be urged to see their doctors for urine and blood sugar tests.

The normal detection centres, are the doctor's offices, out-patient departments, and hospitals where routine urinary sugar of every patient should be a matter of record. In addition to these there are factories and stores where full time medical service would make mass screening sugar tests a simple matter. The Galatest and Clinitest methods are inexpensive and time saving, and the manufacturers of both have offered their material to any accredited organized group. A five minute micro blood sugar test, to be available shortly, will quickly show a high blood sugar, which can later be verified by standard tests.

The committee for this section will have more definite details at a later date and at all times welcomes suggestions for the success of the program. But every doctor, specialist or general practitioner, should observe Diabetes Week by having his own urine examined for sugar and that of every member of his family, the urine to be collected within 90 minutes after a full meal.

This Diabetes Detection Drive is not just for a week or a month. It has no time limit and the minimum goal is A Urinalysis For Everyone Every Year.

This survey is the doctors own project, a powerful answer to those who believe that medicine should be State controlled, and a great opportunity for the general practitioner in whose hands the treatment of the diabetic rightfully belongs. It is not known how many diabetics there are in the county of Hampden with over 332,000 people, but for every diabetic now under treatment, there is an equal number whom nobody knows. Our task is to find them. E. D.

Hot Flashes!

Chloromycetin

This new mold extract reduces typhoid fever in three days; also, scrub typhus that attacked 6,000 G. I.s during the Pacific campaign—available, hopefully, by Christmas from P.D.

BACILLOMYCIN

At last a bacillus subtilis, that bane of well-run laboratories, has been put to work. In addition to subtilin, bacitracin, etc., bacillomycin has been extracted from this organism. Striking power against fungi has been demonstrated and almost none aganist bacteria. Consult Wyeth Institute of Applied Biochemistry.

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CHILDREN SHOULD BE SEEN

According to Plutarch, for the most part a reliable reporter, Agesilaus was very fond of his children, (1) and even Epictetus went on record in praise of offspring so long as they were bright and agreeable. (2). "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven", declared the very highest Authority (3) almost two thousand years ago. So in spite of infanticide and staggering rates of 'legitimate' infant mortality prevalent in ancient times, philoprogeneity is found to be as honorable as it is ancient.

Much has been done during the Christian era to improve the lot of the children. The pace of betterment has been accelerated in this Atomic age, thanks to God-given inspirations and revelations, so that 'cholera infantum' no longer leads the list of child-killers. Even the death-rate in tuberculosis of the 1-4 year age group was reduced 61% in the years from 1930 to 1946, according to data charted for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. (4).

But the unrelenting figures also point to the shameful fact that in the same span of years accidental deaths decreased only 13% in the infants and pre-school children, and 39% in those from 5 to 9 years of age, so that this preventable cause of death heads the list in both groups. Literally thousands of potential messengers of heaven on earth are as dead as the Shunamite's son because science has outrun our civilization. We have saved precious lives through brilliant research and enlightened care only to lose them through neglect that, for the most part, is inexcusable.

Fortunately there are some Elishas at hand. The traffic officers, as is well known, have done much to prevent accidents through their safety patrols in our schools, and will continue the vital instruction. An intensive campaign also will be launched this Fall by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company with the cooperation of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Safety Council and the Children's Bureau of the Federal Security Agency to bring this urgent problem home to the people where the responsibility rests.

Prevention of accidental deaths of children is good business for the foresighted insurance company. (5) That it is patriotic also, and would benefit all of us, needs no slightest argument.

As for me, I could do with lots more harbingers of heaven, but, alas, what could they do with me?

Addenda:

1. Plutarch's Morals, Laconic Apopthegms of Agesilaus the Great.
2. Epictetus' Discourses, Concerning a Person Whom He Treated with Disregard, 24.
3. Matthew 19,14.
4. Health and Welfare Division, 1 Madison Ave., New York 10, N. Y.
5. Unsolicited testimonial.

S. Q. Lapius

Notice!

At a meeting of the officers and chairmen of committees of the Hampden District Medical Society held September 9, 1948, it was suggested that in order to give greater continuity of the administration to the Hampden District Medical Society, that a board of directors consisting of 5 to 7 members should be constituted. It has also been suggested that this board might be selected by the counselors with one representative from each major community of the district and that this member shall be voted upon by the society as a whole.

If this meets with the approval of the society at the next meeting the president might be authorized to appoint a committee to draft the appropriate resolution to put this suggestion into force.

Attending this meeting were Drs. Hildreth, Riordan, Williams, Henderson, Bagg, Hagler, Seaman, Schadt, Steele and Johnson.

DO YOU VOTE?—AND HOW?

Failure to vote is the best answer to the discontents the world over.

Here where we can vote, we are most negligent. In medicine this is equally true.

We do not have proper representation because we do not insist upon it.

In medicine there is a growing feeling of revolt against the rule of the many by the few. But, if the few did not act, I fear little would be accomplished—thanks to the inertia of the average doctor.

Most of our representatives in medicine are nominated by a committee named by the presiding officer, and as a rule a drone of half hearted approval by the few members present signifies the continuation of the "old order". The only gleam of victory is seen in the eyes of the "ins" who magnanimously agree to lead the sheep for another term.

Sometimes I am inclined to rise at such a point and move that their term be made for life—but, I haven't the nerve. There is a bare chance my real meaning would be understood and to oppose them—well, some people in Europe tried that.

I am sick of griping. Let us have candidates that will announce something of a platform—things they are going to do if elected and vote for them —secretly.

I dare say it must amuse the All-Seeing One to witness a voice, hand or standing vote which is contrary to the secret opinion of the majority.

The "ins" know the danger of the secret ballots and naturally do not encourage it. It threatens the happy family idea where one policy prevails, or else.

The alumni of many colleges select their officers and trustees by mail in this manner, and I am sure that officers and delegates of medical groups could be elected in the same manner.

Everywhere there is a feeling of lack of voice in democratic bodies.

Will you raise yours for a secret ballot wherever it seems practicable?

Otherwise, we must be shepherded as we always have and hope for a benign rule.

Of course, we vote—and how!

A Timid Voter.

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Fifty Years

Fifty years of service to a community is an achievement of which one may well be proud. This is the record of Dr. Harry A. Downey, who came to West Springfield Massachusetts, in October of 1898. He had recently graduated from the Medico-Chirurgical College in Philadelphia, and entered general practice with all the enthusiasm of youth.

He has always shown a receptive attitude towards proven advances in medicine, but has been mindful that he should, "be not the first by whom the new has been tried, not yet the last to lay the old aside."

He was a charter member of the Springfield Academy of Medicine, and is generally present at all of the Academy of Medicine meetings as well as those of his County Society. His regular attendance at these meetings should serve as an inspiration and a lesson to all.

His kindly consideration and his ethical conduct throughout the years has endeared him to the large group who have made up his patients. His dry humor, and ready wit have lightened many a serious moment. He is still active and the indications are that he will carry on his work for several years to come.

We salute you Harry, and wish you many years of active medical practice.

"Rape" of the Gavel

(continued from page 2)

O, the dinner was joyous and festive
With E. Parsons Bagg in the chair
Not a visiting surgeon was restive
For the Statler had passed out good fare.

The shank of the evening descended
When the chairman turned my way to grin
And said, "All my service is rendered
Take over, I'm out and your in."

"And to climax these deliberations
I present you at this time the gavel
Employ it in tight situations
Debates and log jams to unravel."

So I proudly went home with the mallet
And placed it with care on the shelf
In a kind of a whatyoumaycall it,
And I surely was proud of myself.

Now later intelligence rocked me
When I thought I had cause to rejoice
Bob Boyd called me up and quite shocked me
By explaining in lugubrious voice,

"Say, Prexy, that gavel you cherish and hold
Is no chattel owned by the Society
It belongs to the Statler, not us, so I'm told
You have it through Bagg's impropriety."

"Bagg's lit out for the West with **our** wooden maul
And left me all jittery and nervous
He claims that again we'll not see it at all
It's **his** souvenir of his service."

"So send back to the Statler without undue delay
Without question, debate, without cavil
The mallet that E. P. bestowed you that day.
You're President minus a gavel."

Thus, I swallowed my pride and with one glistening tear
To the Statler I mailed back the hammer
While Ned sat in Holyoke with his souvenir
Unmindful of this local clamor.

But now, thank the Lord, I'm happy again
And this mallet on hand I now have'll
Be just enough to relieve the whole strain
Caused the night when E. P. Bagged the gavel.

D. B. R.

(Note: The editors are not to be held liable for the meter, tho the facts are fair enough.)

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DELECTABLE

One notices a change in the management at the Homestead on Center Street in Ludlow. Many doctors and their families can be seen any evening partaking of the continued delightful and reasonable dinners under the new management of Mrs. Charlotte Fiefield. A good meal deserves an appreciative comment.

OYEZ, OYEZ, OYEZ!

The cult of Hippocrates takes on new life in the Twentieth Century. Definitely the resurrection is long overdue, what with atrocious war-time deeds committed by many unworthy disciples, diverse creeds and nationalities and an increasing disregard of the amenities of practice, both toward patients and to fellow physicians, in these days of universal competition.

Here is the dedication as renewed at the recent meeting of the World Medical Association in Geneva. The doctrine should apply to all and sundry practitioners, not alone to medical neophytes.

"Je garderai a mes maitres le respect et la reconnaissance qui leur sont dus.

"J'exercerai mon art avec conscience et dignite.

"Je considererai la sante de mon patient comme mon premier souci.

"Je respecterai le secret de celui qui se sera confie a moi.

"Je Maintiendrai, dans toute la mesure de mes moyens, l'honneur et les nobles traditions de la profession medicale.

"Mes collegues seront mes freres.

"Je ne permettrai pas que des considerations de religion, de nation, de race, de parti ou de classe sociale viennent s'interposer entre mon devoir et mon patient.

"Je garderai le respect absolu de la vie humaine, des la conception.

"Meme sous sa menace, je n'odmettrai pas de faire usage de mes connaissances medicales contre les lois de l'humanite.

"Je fais ces promesses solenellement, librement, sur l'honneur."

Note: If your French is unequal to the task, consult The Journal of the American Medical Association, October 9, 1948, page 435.